

Enlisted Hero Walk Lackland AFB



Senior Airman Caleb D. Heidelberg



Silver Star

Global War on Terror

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918 (amended by an act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Senior Airman Caleb D. Heidelberg, United States Air Force, for gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States as a Combat Control Journeyman, 22d Expeditionary Special Tactics Squadron, 1st Expeditionary Special Operations Group, Combined Joint Special Operations Air Component, Special Operations Command Central, on 28 July 2008. On that date, in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM, Airman Heidelberg and his Army Special Forces and Afghanistan National Security Forces team conducted a mounted combat reconnaissance patrol. As members of the patrol dismounted to clear a vegetated area, they were ambushed within 10 meters by enemy insurgent forces employing heavy and effective small-arms and mortar fire, injuring all of

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the dismounted team. Cognizant of the grave danger faced by his reconnaissance teammates, Airman Heidelberg exposed himself to extensive enemy fire while repositioning his vehicle to provide cover for his wounded comrades. With continued disregard for his own safety, he then stationed himself forward of the vehicle and suppressed the enemy with his squad automatic weapon, thereby allowing his vehicle's gunner to climb to the mounted turret, clear the jammed automatic grenade launcher and put fire on the enemy. Realizing wounded members of his patrol were still exposed and in mortal danger, Airman Heidelberg willfully and unhesitatingly moved from the cover and protective fire of his position and ran toward them. Exposing himself again to heavy enemy fire, Airman Heidelberg carried a seriously wounded Afghan soldier back to the protection of the vehicle. As the fight continued, he brilliantly directed a complex air-ground battle to destroy the enemy with AH-64 strafing attacks and bombs dropped from B-1 and F-15 aircraft. Additionally, he simultaneously directed four helicopter sorties to both evacuate the wounded and replenish a critically low supply of ammunition. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Airman Heidelberg has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.